2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1



by which time most of the duck had gone away, and then sailed for the rest of the season, although I have, on occasion, done both on the same morning, but to get up at 2 a.m., drive forty miles along the seashore and over rough country, shoot till 9 a.m., then drive forty miles back and take the helm in a yacht race from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. was rather too much for my lazy temperament, and I did not often make the effort.

When I first went to Aden I had a small dhow built on the Ma'alla water-front in one of the attractive boat yards which were such a fascinating feature of the place and had been for many years until progress, initiated by myself, reclaimed the area; and the builders, deprived of the sea, went to an island in the harbour where a beach had been made for their reception. The *Nur-al-Bahr* or *Light of the Sea*, as my dhow was named, was twenty feet overall and was constructed of teak fastened below the water-line with copper nails and above with iron, and was built during the hot weather to be ready for the winter sailing season. I spent many enjoyable hours watching her grow. When she was finished she was painted white below the water line and with a traditional pattern in green and blue and red above; and she was provided with two eyes, one on each side of the bow, so that she could see where she was going, as my Arab boat boys pointed out when I uttered a mild protest at this last piece of artistry. When all was finished there came the final ceremony before the actual launching, a ceremony as old as the hills wrapped in the mists of pre-Islamic times when blood sacrifices were common throughout the world. A sheep, acquired at my expense, was the sacrifice and was slaughtered near the vessel. The fresh blood was daubed on the stern post, along the keel, and on the stem, after which the animal was cooked and eaten by the builders. There was a very real reason for this sacrifice and it was not, as some people might think, to provide the builders with a substantial supper. It was to give a life to the vessel before she was launched and thus prevent her from taking one after she was afloat, as she surely would have done according to popular belief. In the Persian Gulf a further and somewhat similar belief is that a woman has only to step over a new laid keel to become pregnant and in the

fullness of time present her husband with a son. Unfortunately it is equally firmly believed that having given a life in this way the vessel will demand a life from her crew once she is afloat, and so all new vessels are closely guarded in the builders' yards until the planking has reached such a height that the most agile female would not be able to jump over the keel.

It was not long before I could manage my dhow reasonably well with the aid of my two Arab fishermen, and for excitement and exhilaration I have never met anything to equal a racing dhow in a stiff breeze being driven hard on a reach. When I became Governor I was more conventional and had a fast Bermuda-rigged "Seabird" of my own, by name *Osprey*, but I never had as much pleasure from the new boat as I had from my dhow which still sails the seas and was fishing off the British Somaliland coast when I last heard of her.

My second main amusement, either in the evenings or on Sundays and other public holidays, or when I was on tour in the Protectorate, was shooting. Duck and sand grouse were to be had at Lahej in the Wadi Tibban; the former flighting up and down the Wadi and the latter when they came down to the Wadi to drink or were feeding in the stubble on the fields bordering the Wadi. It was a tiresome drive to Lahej over very corrugated desert and if I was just out for an evening's amusement I preferred to go down the Khormaksar beach to Abiyan in the hope of two or three ducks. When we went to Abiyan to shoot in earnest we used to set out any time after midnight on Saturday in order to work the tides. The only way to get to Abiyan was on the hard sand of the beach between high and low water, and in order to have as much time to shoot as possible the outward journey had to be made just after high water. This was a variable factor, hence the uncertainty of the time of departure when the actual driving time was only about an hour on the beach itself. I drove one Land-Rover and my guards followed in the second, more to act as beaters and retrievers than as an armed escort, though they always had their rifles just in case. When driving on the beach the trick was to follow the outgoing wave down on to the hardest part of the sand and then run up the sand again in front of the next

G.Gt. Brit., Colonial Office G-3 (1938) 1940 MM1 Aden MM1



### Dhow Building

Dhows are built at Maala by a number of Hadhrami merchants settled in Aden. They turn out about seven vessels a year, the average carrying capacity of which is about 200 tons. The dhows are constructed of Indian teak from the Malabar coast and are well built and fast. They sail to India (Bombay and the Malabar coast) and to the East African coast as well as to neighbouring Arabian ports, and take a large share in local trade, in spite of the competition of the coasting steamers of Messrs. Cowasjee Dinshaw & Brothers and of Monsieur A. Besse (Halal Shipping Company). Monsieur Besse now maintains a fleet of dhows in addition to his motor vessels. Many of these dhows are equipped with auxiliary engines

### Soap Manufacturing

A soap manufacturing industry started by Monsieur Besse in December, 1932, at Maala is progressing satisfactorily. The soap is manufactured by boiling coconut oil and cold processes. Local labour of 40 men is employed, and the output is about 50 cases daily, each case containing 200 cakes, which are disposed of locally or exported to the Red Sea Ports.

### Dyeing

There are three factories which do business in dyeing cloth and each employs on an average about 60 persons daily. There are in addition about 18 dyers who do business on a small scale. The dyed goods are mainly exported to Mombasa, Mogadiscio, Massowa, Hodeidah, and the interior of Arabia.

### Cigarette Making

The cigarette industry is conducted on a fairly large scale by Jews and Greeks with tobacco imported from Egypt.

## VII.—COMMERCE

### Customs

Aden being a free port, there are no customs duties.

### Trade

The trade of Aden is mainly transhipment as the port is a centre for trade between all ports of the world and the neigbouring territories. The principal business is in skins, hides, coffee, cotton piece goods, grain and pulse, sugar, spices, oils, tobacco, gums, shells and salt. The total value of the seaborne trade in the year under report (12 months January to December, 1938) exclusive of transhipment cargo, was Rs. 12,16,02,203 (imports Rs. 8,02,17,766, and exports Rs. 4,13,84,437), showing a decrease of Rs. 42,91,828 as compared

4:Gt. Brit., Colonial Office G-3 (1937) 1939 MM1 Aden MM1



226 nets for mullet, mackerel and a form of whitebait are also in use.

439 The catch is at times greater than the requirements for 258 local consumption, and the surplus is salted for export. Shark 226 is almost invariably salted for export and during some seasons large quantities are dried. Whitebait are exported.

226 The fishermen are subject to certain rules which forbid trawls and limit the size of nets, and in addition they defer to the judgment of their elected Akils in matters of fishing custom.

[228] Licences to dive for pearls both in the harbour and in the waters of Perim are obligatory, but no licences are required to fish.

### Salt.

258 A salt work was first constructed by the Italian firm of Messrs. Gaustalla and Company (now styled The Aden Salt Works) in the year 1885 and it carries on a profitable business in salt production at Shiekh Othman. This was followed by the salt work constructed in 1909 by the Bombay firm of Messrs. Abdullabhoy and Joomabhoy Lalljee and Company. Two more salt works have since been constructed by Messrs. Hajeebhoy Laljee and Company and the Little Aden Salt Industrial Company in May, 1923, and October, 1927, respectively, and which continue to work successfully. The total quantity of salt exported to India and other places during the last year was 396,592 tons. The monopoly of salt for local consumption is in the hands of Government, who have licensed certain pits to Arabs at Shiekh Othman.

The Salt (Additional Import Duty) Act passed by the Indian Legislature in 1931 and since extended to April, 1938, has benefited the Aden salt industry, which under the protection of the duty supplies about two-thirds of the total salt imports into India.

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8:Gt. Brit., Colonial Office G-3 (1951-52)1954 MM1 Aden MM 1

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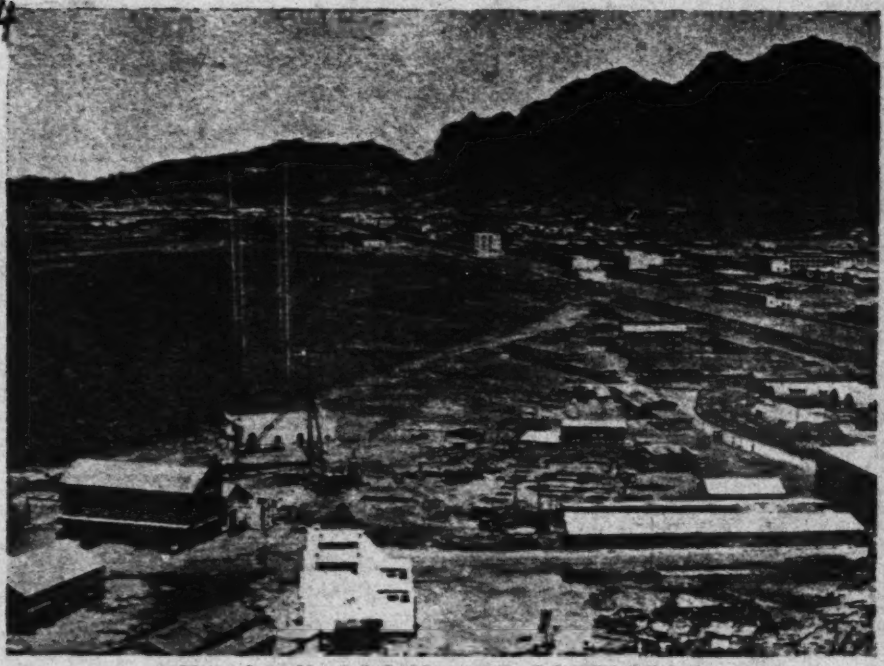

MAALA HARBOUR AND FORESHORE

396

DHOW SHIPBUILDING YARD IN THE COLONY